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TO: Department of Justice  
FARA registration unit

FROM: Ivan Butina  
Global Communicators, LLC

RE: Distribution of material covered by FARA  
Registration No. 5817

DATE: April 20, 2011

Global Communicators, LLC, wrote the attached electronic newsletters, on behalf of the Office of Commercial Affairs, Royal Thai Embassy, and distributed copies electronically to congressional staff, Executive Branch officials, trade associations, think tank officials, and news media. The distribution list counts 733 names.

This is a one-page, online newsletter, and the disclaimer appears on the front page online.

On behalf of the Office of Commercial Affairs, Royal Thai Embassy Global Communicators, LLC also distributed the attached factsheets to 30 U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives staffers during two Congressional briefings organized on April 12 and April 14 respectively.

These are either one-page or two-page factsheets and the disclaimer appears at the bottom of the first page.

Attachments

2011 APR 26 AM 7:34

Office of Commercial Affairs  
ROYAL THAI EMBASSY

NSC/CES/REG  
UNIT

factsheet

2011 APR 26 AM 7:35



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## An Overview of Thai-U.S. Relations

Thailand and the United States have been friends for almost two centuries. There are many unique and special elements in our bilateral relations.

First of all, one reason for the strength of the Thai - U.S. relationship stems from the fact that we both go back a long way and have been through a lot together. Our formal relations extend back 178 years to the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between our two nations on March 20, 1833, during the Presidency of Andrew Jackson, the seventh United States President, and the reign of His Majesty King Phra Nang Klao, or King Rama III of the Chakri Dynasty. With the signing of such Treaty, the two countries pledged to establish "a perpetual peace" between each other, a vow that has certainly withstood the test of time. We, in Thailand, recall with gratification that this Treaty was the first such Treaty that the United States had concluded with any Asian country.

Our present King, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej Maharaj, was born 84 years ago in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where His father, His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol, was studying medicine at the Harvard Medical School. Since His accession to the throne over 60 years ago, His Majesty the King has paid two visits to the United States -- the first one in 1960 and the second one in 1967.

Thailand and the United States share similar values and ideologies, among which peace, liberty, democracy and free enterprise. This leads both of us to continue our close ties and cooperation in a variety of fields as partners in the pursuit of common interests that benefit both of our countries and peoples.

In defense of our common values, Thailand and the United States have fought side by side and have made countless sacrifices for one another.

- Thailand is one of the five countries in the Asia - Pacific region, and one of only two countries in Southeast Asia, with whom the United States has a bilateral security agreement.
- A military assistance agreement was signed with the United States in 1950 following the end of the Korean War.
- In 1954, the Manila Pact was signed, pursuant to which the United States recognizes that a threat to the security of Thailand constitutes a threat to the United States. This Pact was subsequently reinforced by the Thanat-Rusk Joint Communiqué of 1962.

The mutual security agreements still continue to remain strong today. As testimony to the strong security ties between Thailand and the United States are the annual military exercises which our two countries have held for decades. These military maneuvers, dubbed "Cobra Gold," are the largest military exercises involving the U.S. forces in Asia.

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The strong and close ties between the United States and Thailand serve as a solid foundation for the United States' overall engagement in Southeast Asia and the Asia - Pacific region. Such engagement takes the form not only of bilateral contacts between the U.S. Government and each of the countries in the region, but also through U.S. participation in various regional organizations and fora, such as the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference, and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

The ARF, of which Thailand and the United States are among the founding members, is a mechanism that puts a premium on preventive diplomacy to maintain peace and harmony in the region. The United States' constructive involvement in Asia and cooperation with like-minded Asian countries has contributed to the region's overall foundation of peace and security that the region now enjoys. This had made it possible for these Asian countries to concentrate their energies fully on cooperation for the future growth and prosperity of their peoples.

On the economic front, the United States is Thailand's third-largest single-country trading partner after Japan and China, while Thailand is the United States' 23<sup>rd</sup> largest trading partner. Two-way trade between the two countries stands at 26 billion dollars a year. The United States is also one of the top five largest foreign investors in Thailand, with a total aggregate investment of over 35 billion dollars.

At present, more than 600 American companies, large and small, are doing business in Thailand and the number is growing. These American companies are engaged in various aspects of economic activities in Thailand -- manufacturing, energy, trading, financial, consultant and many others. This number includes American transnational companies such as General Motors, Chrysler Corporation, Ford Motor, IBM, Unocal Corporation, Kellogg's, Citibank, NationsBank, Bank of America, General Electric, Coca Cola, Digital Equipment Group, AT&T, NYNEX, Nike, Goodyear, and Microsoft, to name a few.

A lot of business opportunities for American investors and business partners exist. This includes opportunities in basic transportation system, public utilities, such as telecommunications and electricity, environmental protection and restoration, environmental technology,

biotechnology and food processing industries - all areas in which American companies excel. Thus, the economic relations between Thailand and the United States have so far always been important and will still be important and continue to grow, both in terms of trade and investment.

Beyond Thailand herself, a forum has emerged that brings together a group of trading partners with shared values. This is the Asia - Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), whose 21 members include the United States and Thailand, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN.

ASEAN comprises Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and the Union of Myanmar. As a group, ASEAN is the United States' 4<sup>th</sup> largest export market and its 3<sup>rd</sup> largest source of imports. It is projected that over the next 15 years, ASEAN will become the United States' 2<sup>nd</sup> largest trading partner, with two-way trade totaling more than 300 billion dollars per annum.

Other issues of mutual interest and concern -- Thailand and the United States have been in collaboration with each other in a wide range of areas. Narcotics suppression is one of the areas that Thailand has been working closely with the United States. The Royal Thai Government has reiterated its commitment to do its best to combat illicit drug trafficking.

Regarding education, with approximately 9,000 Thai students in the United States in 2009, Thailand ranked 10th among the top sources of international students at American institutions of higher learning. In the military education field we have Thai IMET cadets in military and naval academies and institutions, in the U.S. National Defense University, and in other types of training.

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## Kingdom of Thailand

### Overview of Thailand

Situated at the heart of Southeast Asia, Thailand is a hub of transportation and commerce. Extending 1,006.62 miles from north to south and 481.56 miles from east to west, it covers an area of 198,115 square miles. This makes Thailand slightly smaller than Texas. It borders the Lao People's Democratic Republic on the north, the Union of Myanmar to the west, the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Gulf of Thailand to the East, and Malaysia to the south.

**Population:** 66,720,153

**Capital:** Bangkok, (population 9,100,000)

**Major Cities:** North: Chiang Mai; South: Songkhla; Central Plains: Ayutthaya and Chonburi; Northeast: Nakhon Ratchasima, Khon Kaen.

**National Flag:** Thailand's national flag comprises five horizontal bands of red, white, and blue. The central blue band of the Thai flag represents the Monarchy. It is hemmed by two white bands (religion) and two red bands (the nation).

**Government:** Constitutional Monarchy with a multiparty National Assembly and an independent Judiciary. The National Assembly or Parliament comprises two houses: the House of Representatives and the Senate. The monarchy is hereditary. According to 2007 constitution, the prime minister is elected from among members of House of Representatives; following national elections for House of Representatives, the leader of the party positioned to organize a majority coalition usually becomes prime minister by appointment by the king. The prime minister limited to two four-year terms.

**Ethnic Groups:** Thai 75%, Chinese 14%, other 11%.

**Religion:** Buddhist 94.6%, Muslim 4.6%, Christian 0.7%, other 0.1% (2000 census).

**Historical Background:** There are conflicting opinions as to the origins of the Thais. Three decades ago it could be said with presumed certainty that the Thais originated in Northwestern Szechuan in China about 4,500 years ago and later migrated down to their present homeland. However, this theory has been altered by the discovery of remarkable prehistoric artifacts in the village of Ban Chiang in the Nong Han District of Udon Thani Province in the *Northeast*. It now appears that the Thais might have originated here in Thailand and later scattered to various parts of Asia, including some parts of China. Siam is the name by which the country was known to the world until 1939 and again between 1945 and 1949. On May 11, 1949, an official proclamation changed the name of the country to "**Prathet Thai**", or "**Thailand**", by which it has since been known. The word "**Thai**" means "**free**", and therefore "**Thailand**" means "**Land of the Free**."

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## Thailand's Economic Situation and Outlook

### General Background

Thailand is the world's 30<sup>th</sup> largest economy, with an estimated GDP of US \$312.6 billion. It offers a well-developed and stable infrastructure and a pro-business investment climate based on free-market principles. Thailand's major economic industries include agriculture, textiles, light manufacturing, and tourism.

Thailand enjoyed stable growth between 2003 and 2008, averaging 4.7 percent per year. After a year of negative growth (minus 2.2 percent) suffered in light of the overall economic downturn, in 2010 Thailand's economy expanded by 7.8 percent making it one of the fastest growing in Asia. Other facts about Thailand:

- The world's 16<sup>th</sup> largest labor force, totaling 38.7 million
  - 42.4 percent are employed in agriculture
  - 19.7 percent are employed in industry
  - 37.9 percent are employed in services
- The world's 7<sup>th</sup> lowest unemployment rate, totaling 1.2 percent in 2010
- Foreign exchanges reserves totaling, US \$176.1 billion
- Ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> with respect to external debt, totaling US \$82.5 billion
- Thailand ranks 117<sup>th</sup> in the world for per capita income, currently at US \$4,716

### Forecasts for Growth in 2011

Thailand is recovering well from the global economic downturn.

- The Thai Ministry of Finance and forecasts that the Thai economy will grow between 4.0 and 5.0 percent in 2011 due to strong growth in exports (The National Economic and Social Development Board forecast export growth of 12.5 percent this year.)
- Key factors driving this economic growth include:
  - Exports have grown faster than expected, close to 22.5 percent at the end of 2010, driven in part by rising agricultural prices,
  - Accelerated public investment under the "Stronger Thailand" initiative,
  - Private investment has increased significantly; the number of projects grew 46.3 percent in the first half of 2010, with a 7.4 percent growth rate in terms of value,
  - Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is up 96 percent thus far in 2010.
  - U.S- Thai volume of trade share growth between 2010 and 2011 was 21.87%

*Data sources: The Royal Thai Embassy, Office of Commercial Affairs, the Central Bank of Thailand, and the CIA World Fact Book*



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## **U.S. – Thailand Trade and Investment Data**

Thailand has had relations with the United States since 1833 (177 years), with the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the administration of President Andrew Jackson and King Jessadabodindra (Rama III), concluded on March 20, 1833.

- Thailand is the 23<sup>rd</sup> largest goods trade partner to the U.S.
- Trade in goods and services between Thailand and U.S. totaled \$29.1 billion in 2009.
- Thailand was the United States' 28th largest goods export market in 2010.
- Thailand is the United States' 19th largest supplier of goods imports in 2010.
- U.S. top export categories in 2009 were: electrical machinery (\$1.6 billion), machinery (\$1.2 billion), optical and medical (\$436 million), plastic (\$290 million), and grains (\$240 million).
- U.S. five largest import categories from Thailand in 2009 were: electrical machinery (\$4.4 billion), machinery (\$4.0 billion), rubber (\$1.2 billion), prepared meat and fish (\$1.1 billion), and fish and seafood (shrimp and prawns) (\$889 million).
- U.S. foreign direct investment (FDI) in Thailand totaled \$10.2 billion in 2009.

*Data Source: Office of the U.S. Trade Representative*

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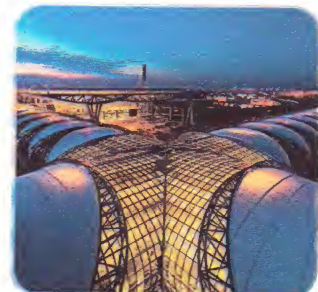
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## Intellectual Property Rights Protection in Thailand

Thailand is committed to the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR). This commitment stems from Thailand's desire to offer a pro-business and investment climate for companies overseas, but also for Thai-based companies as our country's economy becomes increasingly knowledge-based. Thailand has developed an extensive legal, administrative, and educational framework to further strengthen the protection of IPR. The Department of Intellectual Property, Thai police and other law enforcement agencies, and industry associations all work closely together and with foreign countries to further strengthen Thailand's IPR system. The net result is that Thailand has made significant progress in IPR protection and enforcement.

### Current IPR Framework in Thailand

- Thailand is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and has passed all WTO-mandated legislation outlined in the WTO agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS). Thailand is also a signatory to the Berne Convention (copyright). Thailand formally submitted the instruments of accession to the Patent Cooperation Treaty on December 24, 2009. Thailand is also a member of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Intellectual Property Cooperation of 1995.
- Thailand has enacted nine laws specifically addressing the protection of IPR:
  - Patent Act (1979 – amended in 1999)
  - Trademark Act (1991 – amended in 2000)
  - Copyright Act (1994)
  - Protection of Layout-Designs of Integrated Circuits Act (2000)
  - Trade Secret Act (2002)
  - Protection of Geographical Indications Act (2003)
  - Optical Disc Production Act (2005)
  - Plant Varieties Protection Act of 1999
  - Traditional Medicine and Practice Act of 1999
- These laws are enforced by various agencies, including the Department of Intellectual Property (DIP), the Royal Thai Police, Customs Department, and representatives of IP owners. In 2003, Thailand created the Department of Special Investigations (DSI) specifically to address IPR enforcement.
- Thailand established the first ever specialized Central Intellectual Property and International Trade Court in 1997. In that year, Thailand established also a specialized Department of Intellectual Property and International Trade Litigation under the auspices of the Office of the Attorney General.



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- In 2009, Thailand created the National Committee on Intellectual Property to help coordinate policy, legal, and enforcement efforts.
- The Thai government regularly sponsors a number of outreach programs to educate companies on the importance of IPR protection investment.

### **Important Statistics on Intellectual Property Rights Protection in Thailand**

- In 2010, Thailand's law enforcement agency actions resulted in 5,610 arrests, including 89 major cases resulting in over 3.1 million infringing goods being seized.
- In 2010, the amount of fines imposed doubled from the previous year, up to 257 million baht.
- In 2009, the Central Intellectual Property and International Trade Court presided over 7,131 intellectual property cases, including:
  - 396 civil cases,
  - 6,735 criminal cases,
  - Prison terms were imposed in 119 cases,
  - 895 search warrants were requested by the police, with 532 (60 percent) granted.
- In 2010, the DIP in collaboration with the Royal Thai Police, the Customs Department and the DSI organized three destruction ceremonies of confiscated IPR infringing goods.
  - Over 875,000 items worth over 2,357 million baht were destroyed.
- Thailand continues to hold regular meetings with important stakeholders to identify constructive ways and means to ensure the continued supply and access to medicines, particularly life-threatening illnesses such as heart disease, HIV/AIDS and cancer.
  - In 2007, Thailand was placed on USTR's Priority Watch List, primarily over the issue of compulsory licensing.
  - Thailand handles this issue with great caution to ensure that any measures taken are in conformity with Thailand's rights and obligations under international agreements.

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## GSP – A Story of Mutual Trade Success

### About the GSP Program

- The United States GSP program was initiated in 1976 to help poor developing countries to become competitive in the global market without damaging sensitive U.S. industries that compete with these imports.
- GSP is a “one way” preferential program whereby eligible countries and products can enter the United States duty free area but reciprocal benefits are not necessarily granted for U.S. products.
- GSP is not a permanent program and, while there is widespread support among U.S. lawmakers for extending GSP, passage is currently complicated by its inclusion in the Obama administration's comprehensive trade package that includes approval of several free trade agreements and other trade policy issues.

### How the GSP Program Benefits the United States

- In 2009, GSP benefits allowed U.S. businesses to save an estimated \$584 million.
- For every dollar earned by export partners, six dollars are generated in the U.S. economy.
- Many U.S. importers of GSP-eligible products are SMEs; GSP benefits help them to grow and compete.
- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce found that moving GSP imports from the docks to the retail shelves supports tens of thousands of U.S. jobs.
- Myriad U.S. industries benefit from the U.S. GSP program. A few of the many examples:
  - In California, many importers purchase Thai foods, both as inputs into further processed foods or for direct distribution to consumers, including through ethnic grocery stores serving the state's large Asian immigrant communities.
  - Florida firms are significant importers of Thai-made ceramic and plastic tableware, kitchenware, and toilet articles.
  - In Michigan, Thai-made auto parts play a significant role in providing competitively priced inputs for the state's heavy manufacturing sector.
  - The large chemical manufacturing industry in Texas purchases inputs from Thailand.

### How the GSP Program Benefits Thailand

- In 2010, 15.9% of Thailand's exports to the U.S. were under the GSP program.
- Products currently benefiting from GSP include certain jewelry, tires, appliances, food products, rubber gloves, fresh cut orchids, and electronic products.
- Without GSP some of these products would face tariffs as high as 14.9%.
- The duty-preference for Thai goods stimulated continuing economic development in many sectors, and helped sustain employment among poor, rural, and marginalized communities across Thailand.

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# Office of Commercial Affairs ROYAL THAI EMBASSY

## factsheet

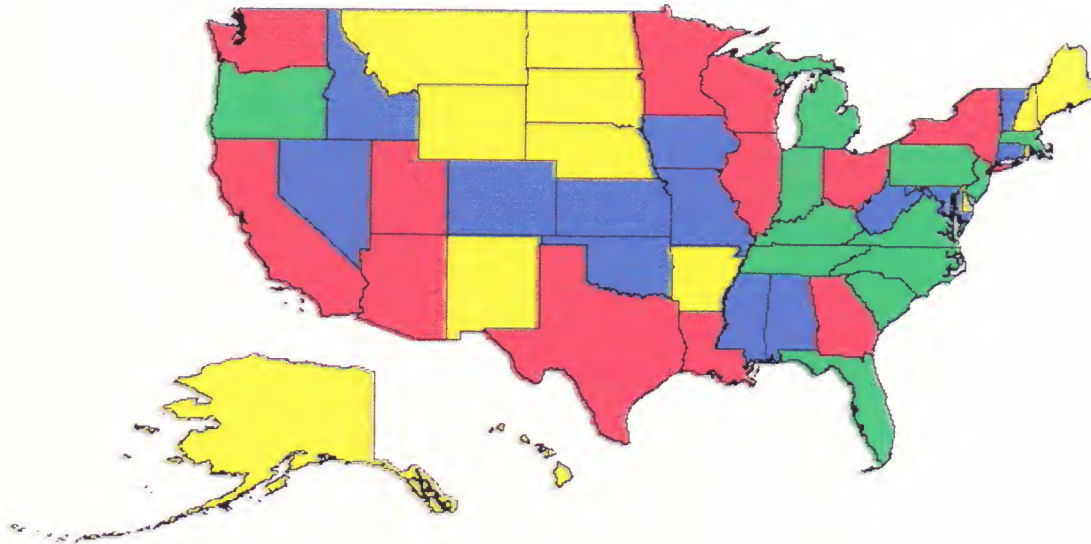
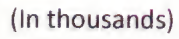
### U.S. EXPORTS FROM YOUR STATE TO THAILAND

(US\$)	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>UNITED STATES</b>						
Total	7,256,616,259	7,915,383,466	8,336,419,189	9,066,556,735	6,918,398,273	8,974,450,677
California	1,699,198,950	1,657,420,793	1,795,247,281	2,005,164,166	1,466,332,446	1,950,748,912
Texas	814,081,666	898,723,189	869,471,128	946,458,862	870,728,194	1,010,773,466
Arizona	519,734,124	443,901,360	492,745,622	468,579,906	306,944,438	606,717,430
New York	542,298,040	442,396,196	425,302,695	461,401,191	365,272,408	422,067,301
Minnesota	398,181,485	497,662,429	309,251,170	181,259,044	186,773,445	370,317,302
Louisiana	139,845,201	194,621,090	261,864,827	229,811,972	187,131,900	360,846,707
Illinois	187,403,978	215,901,764	207,792,475	248,733,993	268,873,354	347,922,419
Washington	229,486,788	868,036,635	685,811,184	355,523,879	244,098,923	254,204,982
Ohio	201,020,964	228,431,304	216,517,177	248,559,822	228,242,272	251,680,504
Wisconsin	66,080,161	75,905,124	187,886,080	247,963,714	207,866,873	229,141,390
Georgia	140,941,898	116,171,652	140,811,951	146,927,081	158,254,265	208,449,355
Unallocated	150,704,892	131,323,555	139,488,106	163,530,315	114,509,841	202,774,736
Utah	40,012,300	28,152,270	41,049,576	163,130,136	46,554,022	172,264,752
Tennessee	146,742,873	139,415,603	193,321,752	235,097,999	166,634,984	171,158,660
Massachusetts	188,247,987	162,161,817	141,677,056	178,435,203	125,585,848	165,478,301
Florida	187,803,620	143,446,280	149,554,615	226,537,488	117,085,157	163,673,518
Michigan	135,691,846	129,029,964	156,303,801	187,091,634	147,357,279	158,843,551
New Jersey	129,545,761	90,679,585	131,612,727	170,914,985	144,730,656	156,453,644
Pennsylvania	123,931,583	142,890,863	121,792,521	163,070,070	135,888,705	156,112,969
North Carolina	96,497,108	109,665,316	147,655,488	146,422,161	117,165,022	134,975,789
South Carolina	45,607,138	57,885,380	69,984,858	88,300,515	58,782,485	128,656,060
Oregon	53,121,914	108,607,464	137,749,621	243,063,847	152,235,435	124,835,315
Indiana	67,192,019	69,173,115	73,872,630	89,180,645	84,234,788	112,807,429
Virginia	57,413,864	80,118,778	72,621,410	103,038,655	62,765,358	97,402,621
Kentucky	53,807,849	52,040,534	61,498,640	91,332,418	117,579,561	93,881,807
Missouri	63,488,045	75,947,165	89,752,379	80,120,956	65,380,271	86,222,328
Iowa	34,059,534	33,799,452	46,685,060	96,674,157	73,659,966	82,693,365
Maryland	25,185,206	34,975,399	53,476,715	84,194,509	72,274,443	77,267,559
Colorado	81,715,348	89,510,979	90,723,779	66,560,116	49,587,067	62,363,244
Alabama	82,393,597	93,958,909	110,169,200	126,191,077	44,580,336	58,073,546
Connecticut	69,503,144	61,799,333	53,422,881	39,551,738	69,623,969	58,070,164
Oklahoma	37,167,554	24,418,716	33,875,814	36,331,969	40,851,581	52,059,917
Vermont	17,648,833	22,893,839	57,221,861	89,379,562	48,333,258	48,866,089
Mississippi	23,300,459	27,036,823	29,532,681	45,091,730	29,022,817	47,944,597
West Virginia	17,083,145	24,884,536	30,644,384	51,386,357	23,038,622	44,767,856
Kansas	41,915,963	38,947,215	52,136,255	48,277,383	27,377,549	34,123,763
Puerto Rico	13,501,398	23,901,895	18,922,664	24,584,985	32,253,683	33,785,315
Nevada	30,295,898	26,680,872	41,000,349	24,128,148	48,624,552	32,927,611
Idaho	44,072,954	55,211,489	48,606,055	50,271,862	46,917,517	31,344,527
Nebraska	29,597,232	24,059,908	20,938,992	31,405,629	16,272,868	25,493,823
New Hampshire	73,894,690	48,185,834	40,932,826	59,218,300	14,239,046	24,890,712
Alaska	30,228,526	18,194,552	36,159,324	21,943,812	17,619,379	21,201,402
New Mexico	11,083,937	5,759,660	21,172,164	13,858,574	8,778,403	20,020,486
Wyoming	21,278,452	29,635,388	20,986,797	25,510,308	24,589,769	19,076,718
Rhode Island	11,189,647	23,027,387	16,206,514	17,092,346	12,073,438	19,009,486
Arkansas	10,339,531	13,455,370	15,150,715	22,429,840	17,771,472	12,197,654
Delaware	10,373,108	9,241,107	11,653,994	15,571,646	7,119,910	10,379,869
Maine	8,077,413	7,483,090	3,762,354	5,280,462	7,452,247	7,775,629
South Dakota	40,898,690	1,614,587	150,111,225	190,217,147	31,615,931	3,831,693
Montana	2,872,824	519,641	945,736	2,618,213	1,681,289	3,009,512
Hawaii	9,305,976	15,242,387	9,521,432	6,208,389	2,423,700	2,397,055
North Dakota	769,260	723,091	1,209,415	2,384,139	3,251,674	2,039,747
District of Columbia	771,886	505,350	586,061	543,680	355,857	350,330
Virgin Islands	0	7,432	27,172	0	0	77,760



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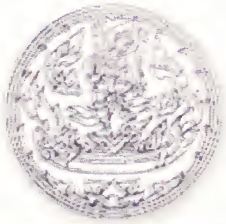
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**Ivan Butina**

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**From:** The Royal Thai Embassy <The\_Royal\_Thai\_Embassy@mail.vresp.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 19, 2011 1:25 PM  
**To:** Ivan Butina  
**Subject:** Thai Update - April 19, 2011



# THAILAND

## OFFICE OF COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

*Strategic Partner to the U.S.*

**April 19, 2011**

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APRIL 14, 2011

## Senate, House Staff Participate in Thai Trade Briefing, U.S. States Export \$8.9 billion in Products to Thailand

### *Briefing Urges Reauthorization of GSP as 'Mutually Beneficial Program'*

WASHINGTON, DC - Twenty-seven Senior congressional staff from House and Senate Committees with jurisdiction over trade issues attended working luncheons for the Senate April 12 and the House April 14 at which the Office of Commercial Affairs, Royal Thai Embassy (OCA) briefed them on Thailand's leading position as a strategic trading partner as well as a gateway to deeper business relationships within the ASEAN nations.



Left: OCA Minister Kessiri, R. Minister Counselor Chakarin and Counselor Jitima conduct trade briefing for senior staff of Senate (right) on April 12. Similar briefing was held April 14 for House staff.



OCA Minister Kessiri said 2010 U.S. exports to Thailand grew by 30 percent, almost double the U.S. growth rate needed to meet the President's objective of doubling exports in five years. "This stunning figure confirms that Thailand is one of America's key trading partners," she said. "Our markets are part of the trade solution to America's unemployment challenges." Staff were given copies of a breakdown showing level of exports from all states. [Click here](#) to download breakdown sheet.

### **Total Exports from Every U.S. State to Thailand Reach \$8.9 Billion**







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**Ivan Butina**

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**From:** The Royal Thai Embassy <The\_Royal\_Thai\_Embassy@mail.vresp.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 08, 2011 11:58 AM  
**To:** Ivan Butina  
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## OFFICE OF COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

### *Strategic Partners to the U.S.*

**March 8, 2011**

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MARCH 4, 2011

## THAILAND INCREASES IMPORTS OF SEED POTATOES FROM U.S. *Ten States Join California, Idaho, Oregon and Washington as Sources*

U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced March 1st that Thailand has agreed to import seed potatoes from ten additional states, bringing the total number of states from which it purchases seed potatoes to 14. Seed potatoes are used for planting new crops of potatoes. "This is a promising development for U.S. seed potato producers who will now be able to compete in Thailand, the largest potato growing country in Southeast Asia," Secretary Vilsack said. He noted that Southeast Asia is one of the fastest growing markets for U.S. agriculture products.

Thai Office of Commercial Affairs Minister Kessiri Siripakorn said the expansion of imports to Thailand from the 14 states is another indication of the strategic importance of Thailand to agribusinesses in the United States. "Our two countries are partners in trade," she said. "American farmers and workers benefit directly from our strong and lasting trade relations."

### States Added To Thai Seed Potato Import List

- Colorado
- Maine
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Montana
- Nebraska
- New York
- North Dakota
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming



The market opening for U.S. seed potatoes in Thailand follows negotiations between Thailand and USDA that included a visit by Thai health officials to several states and a review of U.S. seed certification procedures, seed cultivation practices, and phytosanitary (plant health) mitigation measures. The U.S. exports \$10 million in seed potatoes worldwide each year, and it is estimated that sales of seed potatoes to Thailand will reach \$500,000 in the first year of the expanded program.





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